WKU Nursing Expands

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For years, the WKU Nursing Department has turned away dozens of qualified candidates for nursing school every semester because there simply was not enough room.

But that’s about to change starting this semester. Amy Bingham explains in this week’s View from the Hill.

A nationwide nursing shortage has been well documented for the last several years with universities everywhere trying to find ways to expand their programs. Here at WKU, it was strictly an issue of space but thanks to the Medical Center, the program is finally able to grow.

 “We want to say there’s room for you at WKU and there really is now. It’s the best time to become a nurse at WKU.”

It’s a message WKU’s Director of Nursing has been wanting to spread since she came to campus in 2007.

“I came to Western and you were only admitting forty students and I thought why, there is such a shortage and such a critical need and then I realized the classrooms would only seat 40.”

Space will soon not be a problem. This time next year, this construction site that sits between the Medical Center and the 31-W Bypass will look like this, an 18.4 million dollar 66-thousand square foot building.

 “It will be three floors and nursing will have all of the second floor and part of the third floor and PT will have part of the third floor.”

The first floor will be shared space with the Medical Center who agreed to lease the rest of the facility to WKU.

 “It’s a dream come true because they are going to be able to admit more students which in turn gives us more graduates.”

The expanded program is already in place with 80 new students expected to utilize every space available until the new facility is ready.

 “We are literally maxed out in the space we are borrowing from Tate Page and the space we are using in this building.”

With more than 90 percent of the Medical Center’s nurses coming out of WKU, the nursing department’s new home near the hospital is ideal.

 “It’s a win/win for both of us.”

The Medical Center will pay for it’s twenty percent of the building and lease the remaining 80 percent to WKU. The lease will be paid for out of new student tuition.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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